



PRESS RELEASE
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For Immediate Release

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PCP LAB DISMANTLED
THREE SUSPECTS ARRESTED AND INDICTED

U.S. Attorney Paul I. Perez and Dominic P. Albanese, Assistant Special Agent in Charge of the Tampa Field Office for the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), announced today the arrest and indictment of three individuals on charges of conspiracy to possess a listed chemical used to manufacture phencyclidine, also known as PCP, and possession of listed chemicals. Those arrested are: MICHAEL BURPEE, age 36, of Virginia, CHRISTOPHER MICHAEL ZIMMIT, age 22, of Virginia, and JOHN CRUZ, age 42, of Tampa. If convicted they face up to 20 years' imprisonment. All three made an appearance in federal court today and they are being detained without bond.

A search warrant was served last evening at 2626 E. 32nd Avenue, Tampa, Florida and fifteen buckets of chemicals were discovered in the home rented by JOHN CRUZ. DEA special agents and a DEA Lab Team removed the chemicals which are suspected to be used to produce PCP. On Monday of this week, according to a complaint filed in U.S. District Court, an undercover law enforcement agent met BURPEE and ZIMMIT in

a parking lot in Tampa to culminate the sale of three gallons of piperidine. The defendants were willing to pay \$3,900 for the piperidine which is a key ingredient in the manufacture of PCP. When the final meeting took place, JOHN CRUZ was also in the parking lot to assist in the deal.

Following the arrest of the defendants further investigation led agents to the house located at 2626 E. 32nd Avenue in Tampa, Florida, which was rented by JOHN CRUZ. A search warrant was obtained Wednesday evening and a variety of chemicals were removed from the home.

This investigation is being conducted by DEA with the assistance of the Tampa Police Department. It will be prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Jeffrey Downing.

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of the federal criminal laws, and every defendant is presumed innocent unless, and until proven guilty.

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NOTE: For further background information on the drug PCP contact

Public Information Officer and DEA Special Agent Joe Kilmer at (305) 590-4837.